CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A shelf to which different accessories are adapted to be mounted, wherein each accessory has a different mounting arrangement, comprising:

a support surface; and

at least one row of aligned openings formed in the support surface, wherein at least one of the openings includes a central area and a pair of aligned end areas extending in opposite directions from the central area;

wherein a first shelf accessory with a tab-type mounting arrangement is mounted to the shelf by positioning a tab member associated with the first shelf accessory within the central area and at least one of the end areas of the opening, and wherein a second shelf accessory with an axially-extending mounting member is mounted to the shelf by placing the axially extending mounting member through the central area of the opening, wherein the end areas of the opening are sized so as to engage the axially extending mounting member and to maintain the axially extending mounting member within the central area of the opening.

2. The shelf of claim 1, wherein the central area of the opening comprises a pair of arcuate edges extending in opposite directions from facing inner portions of the pair of aligned end areas.

3. The shelf of claim 1, wherein the tab member is configured such that a first portion of the tab member is received within a first one of the pair of aligned end areas and a second portion of the tab member is positioned within a second one of the aligned end areas.

4. The shelf of claim 3, wherein the tab member further includes an intermediate portion located between the first and second portions and disposed within the central area of the opening.

5. The shelf of claim 1, wherein the second shelf accessory comprises an upstanding shelf divider having a lower end defining a mounting structure, and wherein the axially-extending mounting member comprises a fastener engageable with the mounting structure and received within the central area of the opening.

6. The shelf of claim 1, wherein the second shelf accessory comprises a rod-like member having an axially extending mounting portion adapted to be received within the central area of the opening.

7. The shelf of claim 1, wherein a plurality of rows of aligned openings are formed in the support surface, and wherein each opening in each row of openings includes a central area and a pair of end areas extending in opposite directions from the central area.

8. A slot configuration for at least one slot formed in a support surface of a shelf, comprising a primary open area and a pair of aligned secondary open areas extending in opposite directions from the primary open area, wherein each secondary open area defines a transverse dimension less than that of the primary open area, wherein a first shelf accessory with a tab-type mounting arrangement is mounted to the shelf by positioning a tab member associated with the first shelf accessory within the primary open area and at least one of the secondary open areas, and wherein a second shelf accessory with an axially extending mounting arrangement is mounted to the shelf by placing an axially extending mounting member associated with the second shelf accessory through the primary open area, wherein each secondary open area defines a transverse dimension less than the axially extending mounting member so as to maintain the axially extending mounting member within the primary open area.

9. The slot configuration of claim 8, wherein the transverse dimension of each of the secondary open areas is substantially equal.

10. The slot configuration of claim 8, wherein the secondary open areas define facing, aligned inner ends between which the primary open area is located.

11. The slot configuration of claim 10, wherein the primary open area is defined by a pair of oppositely directed arcuate edges located between the facing inner ends of the secondary open areas.

12. The slot configuration of claim 8, wherein the tab member and the secondary open areas are sized and configured such that a portion of the tab member resides in both of the secondary open areas and extends across the primary open area.

13. A method of mounting first and second shelf accessories to a shelf, wherein the first shelf accessory includes a mounting arrangement including at least one

tab and where the second shelf accessory includes a mounting arrangement including axially extending mounting structure, comprising the steps of:

forming an opening in the shelf, wherein the opening includes a first open area and at least one second open area extending from the first open area, wherein the second open area has a transverse dimension less than that of the first open area; and

mounting one of the first and second shelf accessories to the shelf, wherein the step of mounting the first shelf accessory to the shelf is carried out by placing the tab into both the first and second open areas of the opening, and wherein the step of mounting the second shelf accessory to the shelf is carried out by placing the axially extending mounting member within the first open area, wherein the second open area defines a transverse dimension less than that of the axially extending mounting member to maintain the axially extending mounting member within the first open area.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of forming the opening in the shelf is carried out by forming the opening with the first open area and a pair of second open areas extending in opposite directions from the first open area, wherein each of the second open areas has a transverse dimension less than that of the first open area.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of forming the first open area in the shelf is carried out by forming a pair of oppositely directed arcuate edges between the pair of second open areas.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of forming the opening in the shelf comprises forming a series of aligned openings in the shelf, wherein the aligned openings form a row of openings and wherein each opening in the row of openings is formed so as to define the first and second open areas.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of forming the opening in the shelf is carried out by forming the opening with a pair of open areas extending in opposite directions from the first open area, and wherein the step of placing the tab into both the first and second open areas is carried out by placing the tab such that a portion of the tab is received within each of the pair of second open areas and wherein a portion of the tab therebetween is received within the first open area.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the second shelf accessory comprises a shelf divider having mounting structure located toward a lower end thereof, and wherein the step of mounting the second shelf accessory to the shelf is carried out by placing the mounting structure over the opening and passing a fastener through the first open area of the opening and through an aligned opening formed in the mounting structure.

19. The method of claim 13, wherein the second shelf accessory comprises a rod-type shelf divider having a mounting portion adapted for engagement with the shelf, wherein the mounting portion of the rod-type shelf divider is received within the first open area for maintaining the rod-type shelf divider in position relative to the shelf.

20. In a shelf to which first and second shelf accessories are adapted to be mounted, wherein the first shelf accessory includes a tab-type mounting structure having at least one downwardly extending tab, and wherein the second shelf accessory includes a mounting arrangement including an axially-extending mounting member, the improvement comprising at least one opening formed in the shelf, wherein the opening includes a first area and a second area extending from the first area, wherein the first area defines a transverse dimension greater than the second area and wherein the axially extending member of the second shelf accessory is adapted to be received within the first area of the opening, wherein the second area of the opening has a transverse dimension less than that of the axially-extending mounting member to maintain the axially-extending mounting member within the first area of the opening, and wherein the downwardly extending tab of the first shelf accessory is adapted to be received within the first area of the opening and within the second area of the opening to mount the first shelf accessory to the shelf.

21. The improvement of claim 20, wherein the opening includes a pair of second areas extending from the first area, wherein the pair of second areas are aligned with each other.

22. The improvement of claim 21, wherein the downwardly extending tab of the first shelf accessory is received within portions of both a first and a second one of the pair of second areas and extends across the first area.

23. The improvement of claim 20, wherein the axially-extending mounting member of the second shelf accessory comprises a fastener which extends through the first area of the opening into engagement with mounting structure associated with the second shelf accessory and engaged with the shelf.

24. The improvement of claim 20, wherein the axially-extending mounting member of the second shelf accessory comprises an axially-extending mounting portion associated with a rod-type shelf divider.